



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 425

27 December 1974

PERTH AIRPORT STATEMENT

The Prime Minister released the following statement on his arrival at Perth Airport this afternoon.

"I have been appalled by the reports I have had of the loss of life and damage in Darwin.

I am going to see the extent of the destruction and shall then consult with the Ministers who will be directly concerned with helping the citizens of Darwin and re-constructing their city.

I have called a special Cabinet meeting in Sydney on Monday. I will make a statement after the Cabinet.

I want to extend my sympathy to those who have suffered in Darwin and promise again that we will do all in our power to restore and re-build the city as soon as possible and help those who need our assistance."

Mr. Whitlam flew immediately to Alice Springs where he will stay overnight. He will confer there with Mr. John Menadue, of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet who will accompany him to Darwin tomorrow morning.

Mr. Whitlam is due to leave Alice Springs at 6.00 a.m. tomorrow and is scheduled to arrive in Darwin at 8.05 a.m. He will spend the whole of the day in the Darwin area, returning to Mt. Isa at night. On Sunday, Mr. Whitlam will fly from Mt. Isa to Sydney where the special Cabinet meeting will be held on Monday.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.